

Conference Request Approval Process

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Applicability

The objective of this procedure is to describe the U.S. Department of Energy, Pacific Northwest Site Office (PNSO), process and responsible parties for managing and reporting quarterly conference management activities to DOE HQ. A conference for this purpose is defined as a meeting, seminar, retreat, symposium, or similar event that involves official travel. Sponsorship (or cosponsorship) of a conference is defined as having some control over the conduct of the conference and either having some financial responsibility (funding) or providing in-kind services (nonmonetary) for the conference, including control sufficient to influence costs, venue, or program content.

Requirements

1. DOE Order O 110.3 (Conference Management)
2. DOE Order 552.1 (Travel Policy and Procedures)
3. DOE Order 1500.3 (Foreign Travel Authorization)
4. Presidential Memorandum, GOVERNMENT FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND REDUCING PERQUISITES, dated 2-10-93, which includes guidance on conducting conferences
5. Office of Management and Budget Bulletin 93-11, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND REDUCING PERQUISITES, dated 4-19-93, which provides additional guidance and instruction concerning implementation of the 2-10-93, Presidential Memorandum Federal Travel Regulation, Part 301-74, "Conference Planning," dated 7-1-98, which provides information on planning and attending conferences
6. FAR 31.205.43, Trade business, technical, and professional activity costs
7. FAR 31.205.46, Travel costs
8. Appropriation Law
9. DOE Memorandum, "Conference Management", dated January 2, 2004
10. DOE Memorandum, "Conference Management", dated November 15, 2004
11. DOE letter to PNNL, "Audit No. 04411-2004-2004G17900004, Evaluation of Battelle Pacific Northwest Division's Use of U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Conference Management System, Performed by the Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA), dated January 6, 2005
12. DOE letter to PNNL, "Conference Management Guidance", dated June 10, 2005
13. Office of Science Memorandum, "Conference Management Guidance", dated April 13, 2005

Procedure 1.0: Approve Sponsored/cosponsored Conference Request

Step #	Description	Performer	Support
Step 1	<p>Receive conference request from contractor.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Conference requests should be received by PNSO 90 days prior to the start of the conference and/or 90 days prior to the contractor incurring conference costs. The contractor can not incur conference costs without PNSO (Site Manager) prior conference written approval, with the exception of the costs that are necessary to submit the conference request to PNSO.</i></p>	Manager	Correspondence Control (CC) Staff Finance POC
Step 2	Scan into DOCS and assign action to PD secretary.	CC	Staff
Step 3	Assign action to the Program POC and Finance POC and provide a hard copy of the conference request to appropriate staff.	Secretary	Staff
Step 4	<p>Log conference into conference database.</p> <p>Receive electronic version from contractor and place on PNSO Shared drive under the appropriate Program POCs name.</p>	Secretary	Staff

Step 5	<p>Review conference request to ensure it meets the definition of a conference. The order does not apply to the following situations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Formal, structured training programs (including seminars specifically held for training purposes) that have specific objectives identified to improve certain knowledge, skills, and abilities; 2) activities concerning work not funded by DOE that is conducted by DOE Contractors; 3) meetings requiring only local travel (i.e. meetings held locally that do not involve travel outside local area) 4) Federal Advisory Committee meetings; 5) Contract preproposal, bid opening, and negotiations; 6) Public hearings and associated briefings; 7) Audit, inspection, and investigation activities; 8) DOE technical/business program, project, or peer reviews; 9) Activities funded through arrangements such as grants and cooperative agreements; and 10) Employees traveling to a site where work for DOE is being performed to discuss the status of work <p>If the order does not apply go to Step 15 to notify the contractor.</p>	Program POC	Finance POC
Step 6	<p>Review the conference request to ensure that the following supporting documentation are attached to the request:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conference Request 2) Office of Science Conference Questionnaire 3) Detailed Agenda (needs to include proposed topics with types/tentative/applicable speakers) 4) Funding documentation 	Program POC	Finance POC

Step 7	<p>Review conference request and supporting documentation to ensure it is a Scientific and Technical conference and that documentation adequately justifies approval in accordance with the below criteria (attachment 2&3 of DOE Order O 110.3)</p> <p>1) Program Mission-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is the conference related to the mission and goals of the Office of Science/Other HQ program Office and PNSO/PNNL ? (Specifically, how essential is the conference to those goals and mission?). <p>2) Purpose and Objectives-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is the purpose of the proposed conference appropriately justified and certification of the importance to the program mission clearly delineated in the request? b. are alternative means available for achieving the same expected results? c. are other conferences planned or scheduled with the same objectives? Could this conference be combined with another? d. If the conference is recurring, is the need for this one justified at this time? The justification needs to address the current programmatic needs for the conference. Do not assume that an annual conference must be held merely because it was held previously. <p>3) Location-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Is the conference location the most cost-effective? b. Is there a basis for criticism? c. Have cost comparisons of other locations been considered? d. Is the location necessary to accomplish the conference goal (e.g., site visit to demonstrate research and development activity)? e. Is the conference site reasonably central to the majority of participants to lessen travel costs? 	Program FOC	PNSO PCDR-05 Finance PC-05
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	<p>f. Is the location the best suited for the conference considering cost, attendance, and conference purpose? Ensure there is an adequate rationale and justification for site selection; a cost comparison of alternate site considered (if location is not at principal facility site of the sponsoring organization); and certification that the site selected is the most cost-effective considering costs such as travel, per diem, and conference logistics.)</p> <p>g. Should avoid commercial conference facilities for DOE-sponsored conferences involving classified or sensitive information.</p> <p>4) Number of DOE/Contractor Employees-</p> <p>a. is the total number of DOE and DOE contractor conference attendees necessary to achieve the purpose for which attendance at the conference is being approved?</p> <p>b. Is there any basis for criticism from external entities (e.g., Congress, General Accounting Office (GAO), or the Inspector General (IG))?</p> <p>c. What is the cost per participant?</p> <p>d. Who will attend and what roles will each proposed attendee play (e.g., speaker, chairperson, expert in a complex subject that requires experts in several subareas, etc.)?</p> <p>e. Can attendance be reduced without adversely affecting the objectives?</p> <p>5) Expected Benefits –</p> <p>What benefits will be derived from conducting this conference? This justification for expected benefits should tie to the specific program mission of the laboratory and PNSO.</p> <p>6) Support Contractor Performance-</p> <p>f. What assignments will the contractor perform?</p>		
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Step 8	Send email request to Finance POC to review conference request and supporting documentation and provide concurrence that the DOE Order 110.3 requirements are met.	Program POC	Finance POC

Step 9	<p>Review conference request and supporting documentation and provide concurrence to the PNSO Program POC that the following DOE Order 110.3 requirements are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Breakout of travel costs by DOE Program Office (SC, EM, PNSO, Oak Ridge, etc.); 2) breakout of other expenses (each category should also identify the basis of the estimate). For example, Logistics (facility arrangement-three bids is required to be attached to request), Supplies and Support (specify costs; e.g., materials, printing, etc.) Equipment and Other Costs (specify e.g., direct labor support and overhead); 3) Identification of funding source; and the level of control over the conduct of the conference (control sufficient to influence costs, venue, or program content); and 4) Certification that no costs (other than preparatory costs) have been incurred prior to DOE approval and that this conference does not duplicate conference presented by other (i.e., DOE contractors or other non-DOE sources) that involve DOE funds. 	Finance POC PNSO POC Program POC	
Step 10	<p>If Sponsorship, co-sponsorship, or funding of a conference with less than 30 DOE or Contractor employees attending/participating, or if conference sponsorship payment and other expenses* is less than \$10K go to Step 14.</p> <p>* Other expenses = logistics, supplies; support, equipment, and other costs [labor support, overhead, etc.] however, this excludes registration fees for contractor staff.</p>	Program POC	

Step 11	<p>If Sponsorship, co-sponsorship, or funding of a conference with greater than or equal to 30 DOE or Contractor employees attending/participating, or if conference sponsorship payment and other expenses* is greater or equal to \$10K Office of Science approval is required.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Determine sponsoring HQ Program Office (SC, NNSA, EERE, etc.) 2) Identify Associate Director or Office Director (if sponsoring office is in SC, which will be the case if they are utilizing overhead to fund conference) or other program office (for non-SC conferences). 3) Send email to HQ Program requesting concurrence with the conference (exhibits 1 & 2). Attach the following information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conference Request b. Office of Science Questionnaire c. Conference Agenda d. funding documentation <p>* Other expenses = logistics, supplies; support, equipment, and other costs [labor support, overhead, etc.] however, this excludes registration fees for contractor staff.</p>	Program IPMSO	PNSO-PCDR-05
Step 12	<p>If the HQs Program concurs with the conference request forward an email to the PNSO Deputy Manager, with a copy to the Division Director, attaching the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conference Request 2) Office of Science Questionnaire 3) Conference Agenda 4) funding documentation 5) HQs Program concurrence 	Program POC	
Step 13	<p>Forward request to Todd Harding (cc to Jeff Salmon and concurring Program Office) requesting SC review and approval of conference request. Forward HQ's approval/disapproval to the PNSO Program POC.</p>	Deputy Manager	Program POC

Step 14	Request secretary to prepare approval/disapproval letter to the contractor. Move conference request. Office of Science Questionnaire, Agenda, funding document and any other supporting information from the Program POCs file in the PNSO shared drive to the approved/disapproved file in the shared drive. Close task assignment	Program POC	PNSO POC
Step 15	Prepare letter	Secretary	Program POC
Step 16	Formally approve/disapprove Conference NOTE: The only person authorized to approve/disapprove conferences is the PNSO Site Office Manager	PNSO Manager	Staff
Step 17	Enter all information in the conference database to close conference. Request contractor to enter conference into the DOE-HQ's Conference Management System and review to ensure that the conference was entered correctly. Close task assignment. Maintain a central file for all conference approval packages.	Finance POC	Staff
Step 18	Submit to the Executive Secretariat conference information for the annual report to Congress on all prior calendar year conference activities and planned conference activity for the following year's first quarter (January through March) by January 15 each year.	Finance POC	Staff

Product Approval Form

1. Product Type:

- ☒ Crosscutting Process/Procedures ☐ Program Description ☐ Management System Description
☐ Other (describe): _____

2. Product Title: Conference Request Approval Process

3. Brief explanation and justification:

This new process describes the PNSO process and responsible parties for managing and reporting conference management activities to DOE HQ in accordance with DOE Order 110.3 and relevant DOE Memorandum on Conference Management (identified in the procedure), and the Office of Science Memorandum, "Conference Management Guidance", dated April 13, 2005. This process may apply to all PNSO staff as the contractor may propose to sponsor or cosponsor a conference within their area of oversight.

Note: Explain purpose of new product, revision, or cancellation.

4. Request submitted by:

Julie K. Turner

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

5. Requirement Document: Does a requirement (or requirements) drive this product? If so, please specify (e.g., legal requirement, R2A2, SC requirement, etc.)

Yes ☒ Please Specify DOE Order 110.3 _____ No

6. Actions identified for product implementation:

- ☒ "awareness" or briefing approach (classroom training, staff meetings, one-on-one, computer-based self study)
 _____ revisions to other processes and procedures, program descriptions, or other products.
 _____ other, explain: _____

7. Representative User Concurrence:

Neomi Mendez

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Kim Williams

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Note: A representative user's concurrence is not necessary for minor revisions or cancellations.

8. Division Director Concurrence:

Roger Christensen

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Debbie Trader

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Note: Concurrence is required by any Division Director who will be subject to requirements contained in the product:

9. PNSO Manager Approval:

Paul Kruger

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Note: Signature approves this product for deployment on the PNSO web site.